

New York March 5. 48

My dear Thoreau

The hand-writing of your letter is so miserable, that I am not sure I have made it out. If I have it seems to me you are the same old sixpence you used to be, rather rusty, but a genuine piece.

I see nothing for you in this earth but that field which I once christened "Briars"; go out upon that, build yourself a hut, & there begin the grand process of devouring yourself alive. I see no alternative, no other hope for you. Eat yourself up; you will eat nobody else, nor anything else.

Concord is just as good a place as any other; there are indeed, more people in the streets of that village, than in the streets of this. This is a singularly muddy town; muddy, solitary, & silent.

They tell us, it is March; it has been all March in this place, since I came. It is much warmer now, than it was last November, foggy, rainy, & perfect weather indeed.

In your line, I have not done a great deal since I arrived here; I do not mean the Pencil line, but the Staten Island line, having been there once, to walk on a beach by the Telegraph, but did not visit the scene of your dominical duties. Staten Island is very distant from No. 30 Corn St.

I saw polite William Emerson in November last, but have not caught him any glimpse of him since then. I am as usual suffering the various alternations from agony to despair, from hope to fear, from painful pleasure. Such wretched one-sided productions are you. Know nothing of the universal man; you may think yourself well off.

That baker, — Baker, who used to live on two crackens a day, I have not seen, nor Black, nor Dathell, nor Daveday nor Rynders, or any of Emerson's old cronies, excepting James, a little fat, rosy Swedishborgian amateur, with the look of a butcher, the brains & heart of a Pascal. — W^m Channing I see nothing of him; he is the duplex good fellow, of I have all-too-many of these now.

I have seen something of your friends, Waldo, and Tappan, I have also seen our good man "McLean", the keeper of that stupid place the "Mercantile Library". I have been able to find there no book which I should like to read.

Respecting the country about this city, there is a walk at Brooklyn rather pleasing, to a sand upon the high ground, look at the distant Ocean. This, is a very agreeable sight. I have been four miles, up the island in addition, where I saw, the bay; it looked very well, and appeared to be in good spirits.

I should be pleased to hear from Van Ratscha occasionally; my last advices from the Polar Bear are getting stale. In addition to this, I find that my Corresponding members at Van Diemen's land, have wandered into circles. I acknowledge that I have not lately corresponded very much with that section.

I hear occasionally from the World; everything seems to be promising in that quarter, business is flourishing, & the people are in good spirits. I feel convinced that the Earth harder claims to our regard, than formerly; these mild winters deserve a severe curse. But I am well aware that the Earth will talk about the necessity of routine, taxes, &c. On the whole, it is best not to complain without necessity.

Mumbo-Jumbo is recovering from his attack of sore eyes, you will soon see him, in a pair of canvas-trousers, scarlet jacket, & cocked hat. I understand he intends to demolish all the remaining species of *Fetidissima* at a meal; I think it improbable it will vomit him. I am sorry to say, that Poly-Poly has received intelligence of the death of his only daughter, Maria; this will be a terrible wound to his paternal breast.

I saw Langfordrock a few days since; he is wretchedly poor, has an attack of the colic, & expects to get better immediately. He said a few words to me, about you. Says he, that fellow Korean might be something, if he would only take a journey through the Everlastin, No, thence for the North Pole.

"By God", said the old Clothes-bag, "warming up", I should like to take that fellow out into the Everlasting glo, & explode him like a bomb-shell; he would make a loud report. He needs the Blumine flower banners; that would be his salvation. He is too dog, too composed, too chalky, too concrete. I want to get him into my fingers. It would be fun to see him pick himself up. I camped the old fellow in a majestic style.

Henry Thoreau
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Does that execrable compound of Sawdust & Slagation, Blcott still prove about nothing, & that rat-tug-grater of Hosmer yet shriek about nothing, - does any body still think, coming to Concord & like, I mean new people, if they do, let them beware of your philosophers.

Everyrson, dear Thoreau

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